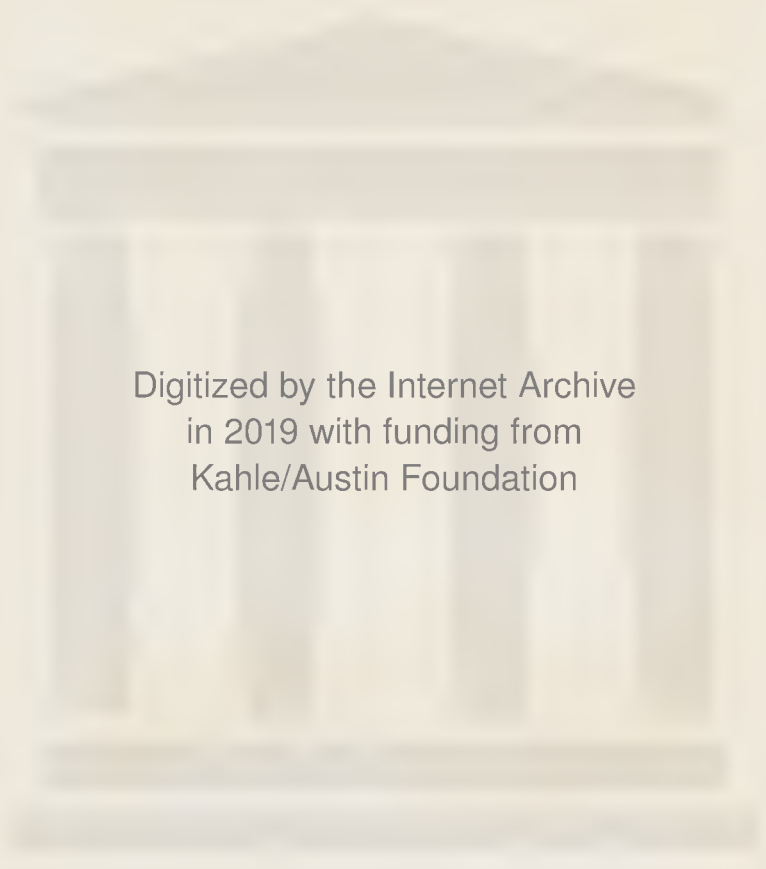


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D. H. LAWRENCE
An American Interpretation

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By

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TO
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THE books of D. H. Lawrence embody the pilgrimage of a human soul in the modern world. They are valiant with the integrity of a man facing the tragedy of these years. He has known the roots of this tragedy in men and women. He knew it in his own childhood and young manhood whose portrait, probably, is in *Sons and Lovers* and others of the early novels. Lawrence's theater of the world has been the innermost, the most fugitive and ashamed self. He has parted the soul, leaf from leaf, achieving sentient, yet merciless self-knowledge. His work, despite his writing in every mode of English literature, is in accord. The more than score of volumes written before Lawrence's thirty-eighth year—novels, plays, travel books, poems, criticism—are the record of a man, imperious and ecstatic in recognition of dignity and loveliness, struggling against the

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inhuman mechanisation of all mankind.

Like Paul Morel, of *Sons and Lovers*, D. H. Lawrence was born in a coal mining district of England. Like Birkin, in *Women in Love*, he came from the people, whose lives are passionate and close to earth, close to toil and stark things; unlike the mental and theoretic middle class. He knew laboring people close, and the English countryside, the face of the land called England that breathes in his pages; as he knew too by personal circumstance, mining and machine industry, foundations of industrial society. His own experience gave him matter to work into the lineaments of the age of the machine.

The age lives in his men and women. Independently he has interpreted the relation of mother and son on which Freud has thrown light; only Lawrence's is not the pattern of science, but the passion of love and agony, dawning of mind and soul attempting to find foothold in existence, the ecstasy and bitterness of first love and the blackness of black despair that opens with the death of a

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mother. The mother of *Sons and Lovers* is one unsatisfied by her husband. She is the sort of clever woman of whom the grandmother speaks in *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*: "I was always sorry my youngest son married a clever woman. He only wanted a bit of coaxing and managing, and you clever women won't do it." She is a mother who seeks from her son the fulfilment denied her in marriage. Her love becomes stern retribution; she is a mother of our time. Lawrence's tortured people are products of the forces that have made all people of today. In *The Rainbow* he seeks their legend, goes back to their origins in the soil and the 1840's. Generations of farming people, rooted in the land, and sending their scions to colleges, professions, the arts; humble coal miner and struggling mother; mine owner, labor leader and servants of the machine looming, an evil deity over the lives of thousands; these people, of all walks and ages, throng D. H. Lawrence's pages. If Goethe stood at the confluence of alchemy and modern research—of

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the mediaeval world touching the world of scientific explorations—D. H. Lawrence passes through our jerry-built and faithless society, a lover and a religious soul, recording its collapse.

The books are eloquent of his life. The same character by different names, under varying aspects, appears and reappears in the stories, the poems, the plays, the novels. It is a record of the stubbornness of experience subdued to clarity. A youthful love of Lawrence illumines modern women. Her imprint is upon many of his pages. No one can read *Sons and Lovers* and not remember Miriam, perhaps with something akin to a shudder. She is a farm girl, her imagination too exquisitely cultivated. She is a product of centuries of rejecting the animal in humanity, she lives in a fanciful world. Terrified of sex by her mother, she makes of her love a torture. She is clumsy, brooding and goes through self-conscious agonies. She can understand subtly, but not deeply accept, a man. Her unbridled emotion repels though

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it is conveyed only in the tone of her voice. Carried a stage farther, she becomes the Hermione Roddice of *Women in Love*, with spiritualised senses and, at root, a murderous lust to dominate other people.

Miriam's poisonous "purity," Paul Morel's struggle with the girl, and his mother's efforts in his behalf, move through *Sons and Lovers* like bright color in a masterpiece of a Dutch painter. Another love, Clara, is a fine portrait of a woman Rubens would have loved to paint - had he been able like Lawrence to pierce the hard exterior. Through Clara, Morel finds release in passion—and in her he fulfils something so that she can return to her husband. In this early book D. H. Lawrence displays his counterpoint, of lives moving musically each life distinct. It is a full and richly detailed picture of a miner's home and a boy coming to manhood there. It records the struggle for life of a son against a mother whose mentality had stood between her and her husband. It is permeated with love of farm, delight of flower and beast and

However, this paper
suggests the undertone

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country-side. It leads too, into Lawrence's later explorations of men. Paul Morel, victim of mother-love, is the man who feels himself rejected—never fully part of another existence. He cannot choose to take his first-love Miriam. Nor can she irrevocably choose him. Each expects to be taken by the other as by a parent. The second love, Clara, leaves him to go back to her husband. She feels Morel to be never entirely *with* her—though he has given her what her husband never could. She for her part demands a man shall come to her not only with all of himself, he must also surrender his manhood. That is why she can go back, from Paul Morel, to her broken husband. Clara in her insistence is kin to Miriam. The dark sensuous nature of these women is refined into a sharp and unrelenting will, like Banford's in that fine story, "The Fox." They are of women today, flesh of their flesh and of their spiritual pattern: women who have made our society; who manage concerts; prescribe to painters and writers; for whom bankers and navvies slave.

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The character is in other of D. H. Lawrence's books. It is Emily in the earlier *White Peacock*; Hilda Millership in the story named "Shades of Spring;" Helena in *The Trespasser*—each character individual.

Paul Morel has parallels among the men of D. H. Lawrence. Some of the men are blighted by the excessive emotion their mothers have roused in them. They remain virgin in an iron constraint that prevents their finding ever again a love to replace the mother-love they despair of. Such is the charming, graceful and cultivated Bertie Reid, of "The Blind Man" whom the blind man's friendly, loving touch profoundly shocks. Such is Anton Strebensky of *The Rainbow*, a military man serving an abstraction, who feels himself a limbless trunk, powerless in face of his love. Alfred Durant, of "The Daughters of the Vicar," like Paul Morel, feels himself to be not intrinsically but actually impotent. George, in *The White Peacock* rots slowly because the woman he had set his life upon marries for comfort.

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These, and other men and women of D. H. Lawrence are ground, annihilated in the mechanics of their emotional being. They give its character to our time, of which Lawrence has said rightly that spontaneous love has almost disappeared. They are at the mercy of the forces that produced Gerald Crich and Gudrun. Gerald is an industrialist and a mine-owner. To friendship, offered him in the deepest sense by Rupert Birkin, he cannot give himself. He would surrender himself to marriage as to a doom, though he believes neither in marriage nor in the society it sustains. His inner life dead, he serves machine industrialism. The outer hideousness is only symbol of the inner death. Gerald has lost the sentiment that kept his father's relations with the workmen human. He wills to establish the "perfect, inhuman machine" and to "translate the Godhead into pure mechanism." So, human beings viewed machinally, without the life-bath of vision that is love, become mere instruments, parts of a mechanism, bereft of humanness for

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Gerald Crich and for one another. Through Gerald Crich, industrial magnate, we have come to what Lawrence names "pure organic disintegration and pure mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos." So finely and profoundly in truth, before chaos was actually upon us, did D. H. Lawrence's vision encompass the modern world.

Lawrence has found the mechanism that relates the inner lives of these men to their world; driving them to erect in the hideous machine industrialism of our day a memorial to their spiritual impotence. They serve the machine or, like Skrebensky, they serve an abstraction called the state. They desire of love, not fulfilment in rhythmic being, but dope, anodyne. Of women they seek the death of the day's living death. The day is negated and allowed to become hideous for lack of common purpose. They flee from, even though they maintain, the hideousness. They flee to their women. Even the women, Ursula's mistress for example, who marries

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Tom Brangwen, join in worship of the machine. Hence, machine-driven herd people. Hence destroying women, bereft of the Holy Ghost that is their due, destroying men who can bring them only worship of their sex. Men have made a goddess of woman, more terrible and destructive than any idol that ever exacted sacrificial blood. The tragedy is told in Skrebensky's abject failure to satisfy Ursula. He can merely serve the British Empire, not come luminous and commanding to a woman. Essentially—in spirit—Skrebensky, like all the Skrebensky's of our world, is null. The same theme is simple and clear in the story named "The Primrose Path." There, a variant of the Gerald Crich type is driven by his fear of life from one love to another, to Australia: Melbourne and Sydney—and back to England again. He recoils from his dying wife in a horror of passion, the narcotic he finds in a young girl he has aroused. The movement toward destruction is complete and inevitable. It is destruction carried beyond even the marvellously depicted

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release Will Brangwen, in *The Rainbow*, finds in sensuality.

The soul's disintegration is achieved in the sculptor, Loerke, a brilliant creation of Lawrence's genius. Loerke is one of the little people of our day, a gnome, heartless, whose art and esthetic are those of industrial society. The work of art, for him, is supreme; neither for Loerke nor for Gudrun has it any relation with life—“It is a work of art, it is a picture of nothing, of absolutely nothing”—because life has been made unbearable and art has become the refuge of people living in fancy. Even the carnality of Loerke and Gudrun is translated in suggestiveness. This is the penalty of death in the soul, and hideousness in life; of a nightmare of machinery sustained by the murderous anarchy named “business”: it makes of art a kind of negation like the destroying passion of men and women.

Ursula voices the reply to Loerke's and machine society's art and estheticism: “As for your world of art and your world of

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reality," she replied, "you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know what you *are* really, so you say 'it's the world of art.' The world of art is only the truth about the real world, that's all—but you are too far gone to see it."

Gudrun and Loerke, between them, break Gerald, the woman idolater. Gerald's sensuality is grounded in this woman. He has no farther than her to go. He cannot subdue nor can he escape her. Whereas she can turn to Loerke and his half-world of art and sensuality. It is a marvelous setting, the chill whiteness of mountains—Innsbruck—Hohenhausen—for one of subtlest and most desperate struggles in all fiction. "It was a silence and a sheer whiteness exhilarating to madness. But the perfect silence was most terrifying, isolating the soul, surrounding the heart with frozen air." Here, like a high note, almost beyond hearing, in pages of sheer genius, D. H. Lawrence sets down the conversations, the glances, the unconscious and semi-conscious impulses in the lives of

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Birkin and Ursula, Gerald and Gudrun and Loerke. It is managed like themes once introduced in an orchestral composition, varied, combined, always working more clearly and completely to the climax. Here is a page taken from the book, with Gudrun's intention becoming clear:

She looked at Gerald. He was wonderful like a piece of radium to her. She felt she could consume herself and know *all*, by means of this fatal, living metal. She smiled to herself at her fancy. And what would she do with herself, when she had destroyed herself? For if spirit, if integral being is destructible, Matter is indestructible.

He was looking bright and abstracted, puzzled, for the moment. She stretched out her beautiful arm, with its fluff of green tulle, and touched his chin with her subtle, artist's fingers.

"What are they then?" she asked, with a strange, knowing smile.

"What?" he replied, his eyes suddenly dilating with wonder.

"Your thoughts."

Gerald looked like a man coming awake.

"I think I had none," he said.

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"Really!" she said, with grave laughter in her voice.

And to Birkin it was as if she had killed Gerald, with that touch.

"Ah but," cried Gudrun, "let us drink to Britannia—let us drink to Britannia."

It seemed there was wild despair in her voice. Gerald laughed, and filled the glasses.

"I think Rupert means," he said, "that *nationally* all Englishmen must die, so that they can exist individually and—"

"Super-nationally—" put in Gudrun, with a slight ironic grimace, raising her glass.

Indubitably magic resides in the writing of D. H. Lawrence. Humanity's common fate rendered through these characters, is spun within them, flickers in the most casual of intonations. Each one of the people is a theatre of the drama in which impulses clash and wills are torn. Gerald Crich, the industrialist and woman idolator, is traced back to the boy who killed his little brother by a fateful accident; and to the baby who had a brutal and vindictive nurse. The thread is fine that D. H. Lawrence brings from invisibility, a slender thread of for-

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gotten things that are fate, fateful because forgotten and because they are integral to a man's life and the quality of his being. The thread of cruelty flashes in view as Gerald Crich grinds down his Arabian mare, tearing her with spurs, forcing the quivering animal to stand at a crossing as a freight train passes. It is the link with the woman, fated by his nature and her own to destroy him.

POEMS

THE struggle of men and women is entwined with the fulfilment they find in one another. Only through this struggle can human beings meet and become more fully themselves. With much of sheer loveliness, ecstasy at creation, this theme too is in the poems, in *Love Poems and Others*, in *Amores*, *New Poems*, *Tortoises*, as it forms the main theme of *Look! We Have Come Through!*—and recurs in the subtle intensity of *Birds*, *Beasts and Flowers!* The poems too are D. H. Lawrence's struggle with the incandescent moment. In the poems he wrestles with the Now. He has sought to capture the thrill and rhythm of love and the many shades of being gripped in ecstasy, of being traversed by sea and planet motion and carried spaceward beyond self. Nothing is more immediate than love. It gives pitch to sensibility, is a stimulus by which consciousness is formed to re-

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spond. D. H. Lawrence would not have the human being surrender to sex. He has subordinated sex to the religious, creative motive, noting only that men and women may be lighted to new vividness by complete acceptance of the moment of supreme physical knowing.

The preface to *New Poems* speaks of the poetry of the past and the poetry of the future, both gem-like and perfected. "In the immediate present there is no perfection, no consummation, nothing finished. The strands are all flying, quivering, intermingling into the web, the waters are shaking the moon. There is no round, consummate moon on the face of running water, nor on the face of the unfinished tide." The night scene from *Women in Love* comes to mind, Rupert Birkin standing by the lake shore, casting stone after stone at the image of the moon upon the still water until the borders clash with waves and the round, bright image is shattered in flakes of gold. Against the completion and death of the world, against the rigor

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mortis of perfection, endless and even vain human struggle

"We have seen the incarnation," Lawrence exults of the new poetry, "the quick of the ever-swirling flood. We have seen the invisible. We have seen, we have touched, we have partaken of the very substance of creative change, creative mutation." To the invisible, the fecund dark and silent and unknown, to uncreation hovering between the womb and death is Lawrence's quest. Doing honor to Walt Whitman, poet of recognition of the instant and the immediate self, D. H. Lawrence, unique in our time, celebrates the soul among the potsherds of flesh.

Incompletely as *New Poems* exemplify this text—Lawrence says himself it is more appropriate to *Look! We Have Come Through!*—they do contain majestic lines such as have echoed down the years of English literature. But *Look! We Have Come Through!* bears the human soul in golden moments—

"And who has seen the moon, who has not
seen

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Her rise from out the chamber of the deep,
Flushed and grand and naked, as from the
chamber

Of finished bridegroom, seen her rise and
throw

Confession of delight upon the wave,
Littering the waves with her own super-
scription

Of bliss, till all her lambent beauty shakes
towards us

Spread out and known at last, and we are sure
That beauty is a thing beyond the grave,
That perfect, bright experience never falls
To nothingness, and time will dim the moon
Sooner than our full consummation here
In this odd life will tarnish or pass away."

Captured, too, in shrill disharmonies, is the tortured essential conflict of a man and a woman. He desires utter annihilation. She strains wildly back to the children she has left behind her to go with this man. 'They suffer and attain fulfilment. *Look! We Have Come Through!* is composed in language moody and variable, steel-like and heavy as lonely night, winged and bright with the feel of fresh flowers. In it Lawrence has written

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the drama of flesh enacted in—that is—the spirit.

The later *Birds, Beasts and Flowers!* contains a different Lawrence, in the sense of one gone farther on his way. He has become one—

“Going down the strange lanes of hell, more
and more intensely alone,
The fibres of the heart parting one after the
other,
And yet the soul continuing, naked-footed,
ever more vividly embodied
Like a flame blown whiter and whiter
In a deeper and deeper darkness
Ever more exquisite, distilled in separation.”

To be a poet you do not have to think in terms that any rules of prosody have yet formulated. Any experience that is flamingly intense and comes to rhythmic expression in words is poetic, and if the writer be a master of English words, then there is poetry. For D. H. Lawrence, poems are the fruit of life. These poems are winged talk, ironic, rhapsodic, indecorous, of a perfectly intense and single soul that exalts whatever words are

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used and whatever subject talked of. His words stamp on the consciousness with intense vividness the thing he looked at, whether bursting fig or turkey cock, autumnal Rocky Mountains, night jungle elephant parade, goat or ass. It is as in the poem called "Snake"—Lawrence telling quite simply—with what intense simplicity!—of a thing that happened, once only in the world, and to no other human being ever just so:

"A snake came to my water trough
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the
heat,
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great
dark carob tree

I came down the steps with my pitcher
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there
he was at the trough before me."

It is fluid and direct, like the pageant that passes momentarily before our senses without our giving heed to its detail, or to the melody or logic that these disparate moments bear for

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each individual. Lawrence has an exquisite portrait of a mosquito; of his contest with a bat flying, like a dark part of ourselves, in his room in daylight; he unties his she-goat in Sicily and watches her nibble shoots of an almond tree; an almond tree blossoms; or, simply he looks at flowers. He has not to get himself into a poetic state. It is all poetry—what he sees, and is. That is the gift, of himself, and his way of apprehending the world, that the poet has to give other human beings. Every true poem, everywhere, has been a fine piece of carelessness embodied in the supreme care of craftsmanship.

The thing Lawrence looked at he penetrated, to the very cool lovelessness of the fish in dark waters; though the fish becomes occasion of one of the artist's ultimate acknowledgements—of his own limitations,

Other Gods

Beyond my range. . . . gods beyond my God. . .

He makes one feel too the libidinous thrill running down the she-goat's spine and the poor billy's impotence.

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It is a new zoo of D. H. Lawrence, a tragicomic zoo that quite supersedes the delicately moralised affair of La Fontaine. It has the goat-smell about it and the flutter of bats' wings, the lumbering tread of elephants, lit up in the night before a tired wisp of white humanity; the glide of regal venomous reptile. Male and female are beautifully and intensely, reekingly balanced here, their struggle reflects our day, even in such a victim as the poor ass, betrayed by love into slavery but remembering for a moment

The Steppes of Tartary
And the wind in his ears for a bit,
And *noli me tangere*

the something American asses and men and goats have all but forgotten. It is that Lawrence sees and feels, smells and senses with his entire being, while America, the America he saw, lives off the top, thinly. Lawrence is savage to sing not equality but the "passionate disquality of men" and things. There is in him a sardonic note, a snarl of irony. If Whitman is something we call America, D.

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H. Lawrence is Europe. Lawrence can let go and his letting go, beyond the barbaric yawp, is the voice of a deeply sensitive and cultivated man, sometimes irascible, exasperated and biting, aware of his power. The poems of *Birds, Beasts and Flowers!* are Lawrence's living faith, an effort to contain it concretely through images in words.

With its commentary upon Christianity in the four poems of "The Evangelistic Beasts"—referring again to the sensual and spiritual infinites Lawrence discovered in *Twilight in Italy*—this book is criticism too, it is a companion volume to the *Studies in Classic American Literature*. To America the poems were first given, some of them inspired by New Mexico, its savage ghosts lurking in paleface civilization. The little bull terrier bitch of the poem "Bibbles", is a variant of the Pearls Lawrence described in the *Studies*: Bibbles who wants to be loved by everyone, "All humanity is jam to you." Lawrence is as beautifully direct here as he was in the book of criticism. Here too is set down in

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most personal terms, in most delicately observed and realized images his feeling about the world of people, about America.

Oh America

The sun sets in you

Are you the grave of our day?

He wishes to be persuaded, desires to be commanded, or met, by this land,

You have cajoled the souls of millions of us
America,

Why won't you cajole my soul?

I wish you would.

It is on a note of inquiry, after considering the American eagle, hatched of a dove, that the volume concludes. For all its prizes drawn from lands and waters of Sicily, Australia, Switzerland, India, the book is for America and Americans above all, it is like the *Studies* an impact of the towering maleness of Lawrence. Here again he affirms the power of vivid and distinguished living against herd domination, mob unanimity; and reminds that poets make a civilization.

PROSE

THE later books of D. H. Lawrence seem to catch and hold his very life upon the page. He is as great a lyricist and celebrator of nature in his prose as in his poems. Especially so in that legend-like book *The Rainbow* bearing a family through three generations from soil and farmers to grandchildren and their struggle with sex—further unfolded in the closer, more complex music of *Women in Love*. D. H. Lawrence's is a polyphony, of three or four individuals kept living yet separate, as clear as the written word has attained to in our time. His irony roots, oaken, in England, as Thomas Hardy's roots but with a lightness and poesy and a flexible humor beyond Hardy's. Tom Brangwen's poetic outburst at the wedding in "The Rainbow," and the wooden bits of prosaic memory it evokes from the wedding guests, is as good as pages of Hardy, as pity-

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ingly ironic. Elsewhere, in the *Studies In Classic American Literature*, D. H. Lawrence has spoken of the failed efforts of master writers to idealize the soil, of Tolstoi's failure, of Hardy's and Giovanni Verga's. Here is his own similar failure. Tom Brangwen's limitations are clearly seen. At the wedding repast of his daughter he rises to harangue the guests, endeavoring to express the only poetry he has known of life—"So I say, an Angel is the soul of man and woman in one: they rise united at the Judgment Day, as one Angel—" In masterful comedy the relatives and friends make their comments, drag the angel of Tom's scarce articulate utterance to the level of their dull recollections. It is the fading of Tom. He is laughed at. His burst of poesy fades, he forgets it himself. It is the conclusion of Lawrence's attempt to idealize the soil.

Laughter too is present in D. H. Lawrence's pages. It comes in an involuntary burst at the telling of a story named "The Wintry Peacock," in which irrelevancies are lightly

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touched, a sort of harmonics of narration. The narrator goes off shouting with laughter. So does the reader. Lawrence is master of quick subtleties beyond the powerful tread of the older writer's prose. The stories run a wide gamut, their subject ranging from study of sadism in "The Prussian Officer"—the war-time fury of enmity that women bore men, in "Tickets, Please"—the involuntary capitulation of an older young woman to a young man in "You Touched Me"—to the full blooded struggle that enhances life, of the couple in "Samson and Delilah." "The Ladybird," in the volume named *The Captain's Doll*, is one of the distinguished stories of English literature, with its picture, against the England of 1917, of Count Dionys and an English-woman coming irresistibly together in the love that is an obverse of hate:

"Well, then, the yellowness of sunshine—light itself—that is only the glancing aside of the real original fire. You know that is true. There would be no light if there was no refraction, no bits of dust and stuff to turn the dark fire into visibility.—You know that's a fact.—

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And that being so, even the sun is dark. It is only his jacket of dust that makes him visible. You know that too.—And the true sunbeams coming towards us flow darkly, a moving darkness of the genuine fire. The sun is dark, the sunshine flowing to us is dark. And light is only the inside-out of it all, the lining, and the yellow beams are only the turning away of the sun's directness that was coming to us.—Does that interest you at all?"

"Yes," she said dubiously.

"Well, we've got the world inside out. The true living world of fire is dark, throbbing, darker than blood. Our luminous world that we go by is only the white lining of this."

D. H. Lawrence is always implicit in his narration, yet he never interrupts it. He can say with perfect assurance, in *Aaron's Rod*: "Thoughts something in this manner ran through Aaron's subconscious mind as he sat still in the strange house. He could not have fired it all off at any listener, as these pages are fired off at any casual reader. Nevertheless there it was, risen to half consciousness in him." In *Kangaroo* he can invite the reader to stop reading if he doesn't like the

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book, knowing that one is compelled to read on; and in the *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, he can tell everybody to go to blazes, he is writing the book for himself. In a sense all of D. H. Lawrence's books are written for himself, as every one of them comes fully out of himself. That is why one feels the man on the page, why the writing compels. Lawrence can take the half-formed image, the almost dreaming thought and give it form, and he can reveal the state of a soul through his observation of a gesture. Always he is tracking the will at the core of lives, disregarding intentional phrases to follow a larger and a blinder rhythm. In the stories as in the novels are Scriabine-like bits of melody, Rubens glories of flesh, and a new, sadder vision. D. H. Lawrence felt and saw disintegration to be going on. He found it in men and women. The collapse of a world is in the novels and stories, it pervades the story which gave its title to *England, My England*; that consciousness is on almost every page of *Kangaroo*.

WANDERING

LAWRENCE'S travels only add confirmation to what he set down of the processes at work in people of England. Having a nostalgia for life he sought it in Europe's source, in Italy. The novels foreshadow and record the wandering. *Women In Love* takes Birkin and Ursula, Gerald Crich and Gudrun away from England until, in the whiteness of the mountains, they meet the essence of continental dissolution, Loerke. Alvina, of *The Lost Girl*, goes with Ciccio to Italy, as does Aaron Sisson of *Aaron's Rod*, leaving the wreck of Europe and man's subjection to woman, to face the problem of man's leadership of man. The two travel books, *Twilight In Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*, are records of the quest accomplished, which took D. H. Lawrence later to Australia and *Kangaroo*, then to America and the magnificent *Studies in Classic American Literature*.

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The books of Italian travel are integral to the unity of this pilgrimage through life; they are more than travel books in any ordinary sense, as *Kangaroo*—which opens with the swift vividness of travel narrative and is full of the feel of the ancient Australian continent—is a node in Lawrence's search after faith, the soul of man in a civilization he knew to be dying.

Italian dark passionateness drew him, of people impregnated with a receded culture that has left them stranded, its marks inefaceably upon them. Lawrence's language, full of simple and melodious vowel sounds, seems to echo the sensation of the body observing, not with the rarefied ideas of the brain, but in its entirety, through skin pores and limbs. He exults in his nearness to the people and renders sensations whole, as a peasant might who had become articulate. In himself, through Italy, he came clearly to know the two infinities: Christ-selflessness on the one hand, and tiger-ego of domination and sensation, which he has celebrated as no

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one has done since Blake. And Blake made a picture of the tiger instead of swooping into tiger consciousness like Lawrence.

"The tiger is the supreme manifestation of the senses made absolute. This is the

Tiger, tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night

of Blake. It does indeed burn within the darkness. But the *essential* fire of the tiger is cold and white, a white ecstasy". And then, later this:

"The eyes of the tiger cannot see, except with the light from within itself, by the light of its own desire. Its own white, cold light is so fierce that the other warm light of day is outshone, it is not, it does not exist. So the white eyes of the tiger gleam to a point of concentrated vision, upon that which does not exist. Hence its terrifying sightlessness. The something which I know I am is hollow space to its vision, offers no resistance to the tiger's looking. It can only see of me that which it knows I am, a scent, a resistance, a voluptuous solid, a struggling warm violence that it

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holds overcome, a running of hot blood between its jaws, a delicious pang of live flesh in the mouth. This it sees. The rest is not." A portrait, is it not, of the successful man of our age? Only he is not as clean and fine—though he is fully as sightless—as this miraculous tiger of Lawrence. He—our man of success and affairs—is sightless as the tiger is sightless, only he pretends to the vision of Christ. Still, he sees only his desire, as the tiger sees only his desire.

The tiger ego kills, knows in sensation. The Christ-selflessness extirpates the flesh, its manner of knowing being to identify the Me with the Not-Me. These two, D. H. Lawrence crystallised in *Twilight in Italy*. Confusing them, he felt, had made Europe's horror. Both pagan infinite and Christian infinite are infinite. Only that is absolute which relates them. Lawrence passed beyond Italy for Italy, like its derivative Europe, is being mechanised. Lawrence felt it, on the roads, in towns and cities, among crowds on his journeys. He was no longer accepted as a

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man but was badgered as an Englishman. He is irritable, explosively irritable on the Sardinian journey. Italian trains are unspeakable, a landlord is a dirty disgusting swine. In the midst of the spare, hard peasantry of Sardinia, it is as if Lawrence had finished for all time with the Europe whose traits are in the men and women of his novels: "One realizes, with horror, that the race of men is almost extinct in Europe. Only Christ-like heroes and woman-worshipping Don Juans, and rabid equality-mongrels. The old, hardy, indomitable male is gone. His fierce singleness is quenched. The last sparks are dying out in Sardinia and Spain. Nothing left but the herd-proletariat and the herd-equality mongrelism, and the wistful poisonous self-sacrificial cultured soul. How detestable."

Aaron's Rod tells a similar story. It is another utterance of a man finishing with Europe, with its people, its institutions, shaking them off after going through them as a dog shakes off the muddied water of a stream he has swum. Aaron Sisson, flutist and la-

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borer, gets through first with the nearest illusions—of family. He is shown with his wife and two little daughters, the woman using her children to compel the man, the two little girls already possessive, destroying. Aaron leaves his wife and children, fed-up with being their slave. He passes through the after-war London, with its English bohemianism of sensual people vainly trying to amuse themselves and calling it art. There is Jim who has to keep filling his belly with bread, while he looks for someone to love him. There is Julia who cannot make up her mind between two men:

“ ‘ Which of them will find you the greatest treat,’ said Lilly sarcastically.”

And Josephine who hopes for a *bloody* revolution—by the miners—as she sits after the opera in Julia’s flat. These people too, Aaron Sisson gets done with, as he got done with wife and children. As Lilly says to him:

“Sacred children, and sacred motherhood, I’m absolutely fed stiff by it. That’s why I’m thankful I have no children.” To which

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Aaron makes reply: "Be damned and blasted to women and all their importances," cried Aaron. "They want to get you under, and children is their chief weapon."

Two men, two individuals, are the protagonists of this novel which, in its lean, hard, biting style, like the whiplash of truth across the soft back of a pampered world, approaches the masterly *Kangaroo*. The man Lilly is part Lawrence, and so is Aaron Sisson. Lilly speaks of his job, "which is to write lies". He like Lawrence is true with himself, has hammered out, is forging a technic of words for telling the truth, a thing most people have no faintest glimmer of, because it comes only after ruthless self-examination, and examination no less ruthless of other people.

At Sir William Frank's, in Italy, is another aspect of Europe, wealth and luxury, soft beds and a fatuous old man having his medals pinned on him before his admiring guests. And Sir William Frank's creed: "Providence with a banking account. Believe in Providence once you have secured enough to live

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on. I should consider it disastrous to believe in Providence *before*." Lawrence has packed an immense amount in his book, men paralysed in war, women seeking to have men for themselves; it is a sort of summary of post-war Europe, producing its flower in violence. An anarchist bomb explosion in a café of Florence, smashes Aaron's rod, his flute. After all, what need for the thing people call "art" at such a time. Is not that "art" a lie, in a time when people cannot be decent with one another? It becomes a pretense of doing to cold and inanimate matter, what they are not doing to their fellow-men: giving considerate and sensitive treatment. Therefore the later books of Lawrence, too, are rugged. It is no time for the prettiness that is served up as art, for that is a lie.

In these books of D. H. Lawrence is only the profound, hard beauty of a man at grips with himself in the world, sweating and working out clarity, clean singleness of vision. Lilly explains to Aaron after Aaron's rod is smashed, that it is no use going off in "love-

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whooshes," seeking to give oneself utterly to another person in love, or mystically in religion to God. "You are your own Tree of Life, roots and limbs and trunk. Somewhere within the wholeness of the tree lies the very self, the quick: its own innate Holy Ghost. And this Holy Ghost puts forth new buds, and pushes past old limits, and shakes off a whole body of dying leaves. And the old limits hate being empassed, and the old leaves hate to fall. But they must, if the tree-soul says so"

Aaron listens to Lilly as one may read D. H. Lawrence prose, in wonder at the music of it, the sharp pictures, the male content of these pages. *Aaron's Rod* is a prelude to *Kangaroo*, leading directly to that book in manner and content.

In Australia the conclusion becomes clearer and more inevitable. Against the sinister background of this ancient land with its glittering trees and strange birds, Lawrence feels the European dissolution progressing. He has portrayed it in the masterly chapter, of letters

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received from futile, petty, self-indulgent, even pleasant people, in England. A few lines hit them off, as they are. In Australia, a transplanted culture, not rooted in the soil but yet as old as Europe's is running down. Lawrence's, the artist's task is to find a faith, something immutably in himself amidst the chaos that is seizing even the far places of the earth. The artist must belong, does belong to no one. He is free of the group, of the group "love" and of the group's lust to kill. He sees and feels people and things as music. This musical vision embraces even the most terrible and horrible aspects of existence. This is the mark of the artist, his stigma and doom. He must unfold to others his ineffable vision, the substance of his life. In novel or painting, symphony, photograph or sculpture, he gives an intimation of himself, the invisible made tangible and corporeal.

On the continent of Australia D. H. Lawrence found an alighting place. He was the artist and thinker escaping mankind as those escaped it who fled to the deserts behind

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Egypt when the ancient world was crumbling. Only there is now no Thebaid nor any escape. By ineffable irony our "progress" and "civilization," having made the world small, have made it too small. It becomes smaller and smaller with a rapid menace that seems to know nothing of human will or supplication. The mob has brought even the artist at bay. He goes away, away from humanity, to think, to find himself, even alone in his relation with a woman in marriage, seeking a moment's breathing space in a world that will not tolerate the dignity of separateness in a human soul. Men seek to compel him with love. With their "love" they murder one another. In his "Nightmare" on the Australian continent, D. H. Lawrence recalls what Englishmen did to a man and a woman in war time; how human beings were bullied; the press, public men, the unclean slaver mob baying at the heels and striving to break the soul of anyone "who would not hunt with the criminal mob, sink his sense of truth, of justice and of human honor, and bay like some horrible

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unclean hound, bay with a loud sound, from slavering, unclean jaws." All the concepts underlying what Lawrence sees and remembers, are passed in review: marriage; "freedom"—in Australia as in America the freedom to go with the mob or be trampled underfoot; labor and capital and the class war; and "love." There, in Australia a man thought with his whole being, struggled and suffered and something of that man's soul is in this book.

"If only one might die," he thinks to himself after witnessing a riot, "and not have to wait and watch through all the human horror. They are my fellow-men; they are my fellow-men." It is through this agony men must go, it seems, and to the inevitable end: "'It is the collapse of the love-ideal,' said Richard to himself: 'I suppose it means chaos and anarchy; in the name of love and equality. The only thing one can stick to is one's isolate being and the God in whom it is rooted. And the only thing to look to is the God who fulfils one from the dark. And the only thing

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to wait for is for men to find their aloneness and their God in the darkness. Then one can meet as worshippers, in a sacred contact in the dark.'” In no novel of our time is a wider expanse of universe more intensely concentrated than in *Kangaroo*.

PHILOSOPHY AND CRITICISM

EUROPE is done for. More and more, Americans will come to know that in their own land, where there is at least food enough, for a while, and agelong hates of race and nationality have not entirely vitiated the roots of hope among men, is the future, if future there be, of western culture. Lawrence's three books of criticism, of conclusions abstracted from the body of his work, are offered to Americans. The wisdom that is given us is unique, lyrical yet penetrating. It is meet for us, sufferers from the finest of the duality D. H. Lawrence has explored. America has produced the finest flower of Gerald Crich's impotence. It has been mechanising the world to make all men slaves of the machine. To us D. H. Lawrence spoke in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. He recalled that life itself, not idea or formula, not cleverness, technique or "science"

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can bring man to himself. He criticised the amorality of psychoanalysis by which it had been made an instrument of American materialism. It had pleased us to believe that psychoanalysis, like everything else, could be made a simple mechanism for salvation. But Lawrence demonstrated that a complex is not eliminated merely by removing all inhibitions to sex desire. Not to ideas repressed, which people refuse to own up to, but to the true unconscious existing prior to mentality, shall we go, to the source of life itself. This must be acknowledged though it cannot be explicitly expressed. It remains ultimate, mysterious, worthy of awe and wonder. Lawrence affirms the soul that has been his quest, and the soul's way of knowing: "Knowledge is always a matter of whole experience, what St. Paul calls knowing in full, and never a matter of mental conception merely." His words are exactly appropriate to America: "Love is a thing to be *learned*, through centuries of patient effort. It is a difficult, complex maintenance of individual integrity

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throughout the incalculable processes of inter-human polarity."

Free of the pat phrases of psychoanalysis, D. H. Lawrence transcends the sexual motive for human activity. He is free of the pseudo-wise jargon of science. "I do not believe that the stars came flying off from the sun like drops of water when you spin your wet hanky. I have believed it for twenty years, because it seemed so ideally plausible. Now I don't accept any ideal plausibilities at all. I look at the moon and the stars, and I know I don't believe anything that I am told about them. Except that I like their names, Aldebaran and Cassiopeia, and so on.

"I have tried, and even brought myself to believe in a clue to the outer universe. And in the process I have swallowed such a lot of jargon that I would rather listen now to a negro witch-doctor than to science. There is nothing in the world that is true except empiric discoveries which work in actual appliances. I know the sun is hot. But I won't be told that the sun is a ball of blazing gas

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which spins round and fizzes. No thank you.

"At length, for *my* part, I know that life, and life only is the clue to the universe. And that the living individual is the clue to the universe. And that it always was so, and always will be so."

This book, with its chapter entitled "Babies And Papas And Mamas", its capricious freshness, drawing freely upon the terms of physiology and biology, wanders blithely to the "science that proceeds in terms of life and is established on data of living experience and of sure intuition." Lawrence deals in living substance, knows with sentient knowledge. His "polly-analytics" is deduced from the novels and poems, not the reverse. Through his own senses, and his feelings of self, Lawrence relates the body to the universe. It is a sort of history of the human entity from the time before birth until the individual knows with his own knowledge the sun, moon and stars. He resolves thinking into its bodily components. It is in detail that would doubtless make the professor-doctors purple; just

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as literary critics go purple over Lawrence's novels after having failed to read them. Only Lawrence is deliciously ironic about it, even gay. The best part of his wisdom and philosophy is his refusal to be too serious about it.

He has written here his knowledge of the supreme tragedy of our times; the stuffing and maiming that goes on in the name of education, making of it a dark horror instead of a joyful way to wisdom. He points the way for parents and mere adults to the rhythmic balance that is true morality.

Although he reminds that this is an essay on child consciousness, he is writing, yet, in the next sentence he admits: "It isn't my fault that I am led at moments into exhortation." At least the fruit Lawrence offers comes off the tree of life, and is not a dried berry from the bramble of professordom. He reiterates the essential of human faith, which must be realised sometime, again: that "the essentially religious or creative motive is the first motive for all human activity. The sexual motive comes second. And there is a

great conflict between the interests of the two, at all times". The obstacles are set forth that are put upon the creative essence of life; impoverishment of the will and neurasthenia that come of attempts to force ideals upon children—through such a school system as Ursula Brangwen faced in *The Rainbow*; the poison of benevolence that extinguishes spontaneous love in the world and the vitiation of children brought too early to consciousness, being made mental and at the same time perverse.

The work whistles and toots, with the capriciousness of an orchestra playing Stravinsky. But it has, too, a grave warning for America, even though the author proposes to lay his book at the foot of the Liberty statue, "that brawny lady", who he expects may look down her nose and bawl: "Do you see any green in my eye?" He warns of American exaltation of sex. To negate sex is to exalt it—as Gudrun Brangwen never transcended love because she had never loved. You cannot—as Mr. George Moore pointed out in the preface to the

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emasculated American edition of *Memoirs of My Dead Life*—you cannot legislate spring days out of the consciousness of men and women or out of its expression in art. You can destroy individuals and art. To exalt sex by publicly negating it, is to hasten the destruction. For in private it is not negated. The danger is greatest, as Mr. Lawrence points out, in America. In America woman is worshipped, she is a Baal and the worship is one of gold. The little, exclusive, personal relationship that is sexual, has triumphed over “the great unison of manhood in some passionate *purpose*.” We are a nation of Gerald Criches, without his cultivation, and it is anarchy we have to look out for:

“Of all countries, America has most to fear from anarchy, even from one single moment’s lapse into anarchy. The old nations are *organically* fixed into classes, but America not. You can shake Europe to atoms. And yet peasants fall back to peasantry, artisans to industrial labor, upper classes to their control—inevitably.” Lawrence’s conclusion is that Americans must choose: “It is a choice between belief in man’s

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creative, spontaneous soul, and man's automatic power of production and reproduction. It is a choice between serving *man*, or woman. It is a choice between yielding the soul to a leader, leaders, or yielding to the woman, wife, mistress, or mother."

There is much profound wisdom and poetry in this *Fantasia*. Truly, Lady Liberty with her "carrot-sceptre" cannot pay D. H. Lawrence for it. "You can't pay for it, darling. If I didn't make you a present of it you could never buy it." In this priceless book is a disquisition on relativity outdoing Einstein, matchless in its force and brevity. Here it is: "I may say Boh, but heaven alone knows what the goose hears." Heaven alone knows what Professor Stuart P. Sherman and the other professors read when they read *Studies in Classic American Literature*. We know from the ghostly rattle of polite professorial bones, (skeleton not jazz)—very unlike the cackle of a live goose—that they have read something. One can even hear the musty droning in the still mustier classroom. This

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morning, my dears, the lecture will make short work of the dense underbrush of Mr. Lawrence's fiction, which I have not read; and we will devote fifteen minutes' study to his coal-heaver style. This is the sort of welcome that America has to give to D. H. Lawrence's deep blood-feeling and cultural awareness.

Out of D. H. Lawrence has come a challenge and an evocation of America. In each one of his subjects, Franklin, Crèvecoeur, Fenimore Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Dana, Melville and Whitman, he has found traits intensely part of our America. He has rescued the autobiography of the American soul from its disguises. D. H. Lawrence, like a tempered chisel or some sharp and relentless boring instrument, goes to America's vitals, not to destroy but to strip off the lies and duality and subterfuges that prevent its voice singing out. He opposes a blood and bone and passion man to Benjamin Franklin's politic virtues, the virtues of industrial slavery; knowing that our liberty and equality

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fiction won't work, because some men must lead and others in their guts must acknowledge their superiors as leaders.

Freedom resides only in order; and order flows from subjection of men to other men. And that subjection is arrived at through profound inner recognition of one's place in relation to other people. Thus endeth the yapping about freedom which is freedom to be lynched if you offend the democratic mob. The idea of equality gives way to men's sense of leadership. And so the stuffed dummy of an ideal social being erected by Benjamin Franklin has to go, together with the virtues thereof, the virtues with a policy. They provoke D. H. Lawrence to make his own list of virtues—those of a full man living in a fleshly body who follows one of his precepts implicitly: "...when genuine passion moves you, say what you've got to say, and say it hot." He says it hot in this book. All the way through. "Theoretic and materialistic" is one summation of America derived from Benjamin.

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Then there is the emotional lying of another kind of pioneer, trying to persuade himself first and then others that the Life of Nature is sweet and lovely. Lawrence traces in Crèvecoeur the vicious idealising process of which the liberty-equality idea is product—Crèvecoeur whose delicate and truthful observation belies his own attempts to poetise Nature and the Simple Savage. The same Crèvecoeur who, if he won't risk knowing in his flesh and blood, will risk all the imagining you like.

So, Fenimore Cooper, trying to bridge the gap between savage America and the interloper, white consciousness, depicts despite himself, in "Deerslayer" the essential American soul which is "hard, isolate, stoic and a killer." Material America has its counterpart in sick souls; Poe, observing his own disintegration in the manner of a scientist—desiring to break down in thrills of ecstatic love the individual's isolation. "A ghastly disease, love. Poe telling us of his disease; trying even to make his disease fair and at-

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tractive. Even succeeding." Then there is Hawthorne recording the triumph of sin in sexless Puritan America. Sex repressed and triumphant with a vengeance. The great American game of Keeping Up Appearances when there isn't anything else to keep up.

Through all these blasting analyses, such as American literature has never before had the good fortune to meet with—such a North wind as has never yet blown away our miasmas—D. H. Lawrence holds a thrilled and thrilling recognition of the quality of the books which have become, in his hands, the artists' and America's self-revelation. He refers always to the human identity that contemporary America seems running away from. Be yourself he insists; and that means acknowledgment of other separate people, better or less than you, never equal.

The abdication of man from his single identity, self-contained and rooted in his own flesh and blood substance, produces American women: Pearls. Read what D. H. Lawrence has to say of the charming creatures. Law-

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rence says it with a twisted grin. He knows what he is talking about. And the substance of his discourse he finds in our pretty children's books of Fenimore Cooper, Hawthorne and Poe. Rightly he says of them that whereas the European moderns are *trying* to be extreme, "The great Americans I mention just were it." That is true today of Americans painting and photographing, and it has been true for twenty years. News of what is going on in America has usually to come to us from Europe.

So it is in the heroisms of Dana, Melville and Whitman. Lawrence makes his profound acknowledgment to these souls, a finer acknowledgment than any American has made. R. H. Dana went alone, two years before the mast, in face of the vast Sea. "He has lived this great experience for us, we give him homage." Lawrence has a masterly bit on sailing vessels: "Beautifully the sailing ship nodalizes the forces of sea and wind, converting them to her purpose. There is no violation, as in a steam-ship, only a winged

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centrality. It is this perfect adjusting of ourselves to the elements, the perfect equipoise between them and us, which gives us a great part of our life-joy. The more we intervene machinery between us and the naked forces the more we numb and atrophy our own senses. Every time we turn on a tap to have water, every time we turn a handle to have fire or light, we deny ourselves and annul our being. The great elements, the earth, air, fire, water are there like some great mistress whom we woo and struggle with, whom we heave and wrestle with. And all our appliances do but deny us these fine embraces, take the miracle of life away from us. The machine is the great neuter. It is the eunuch of eunuchs. In the end it emasculates us all." That is, unless someone comes along who knows how to use a machine.

D. H. Lawrence's acknowledgments to Melville and Whitman are of the finest in literature. "The greatest seer and poet of the sea for me is Melville." He knows Melville, the man trying to recover paradise and

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failing, among the South Sea Islands savages; Melville leaving humanity behind him on his quest of the White Whale, with a fantastic whaler's crew, like the wildly assorted crew that mans our America. This writer has compelled Lawrence's awe. He writes of Moby Dick as no one has ever written. The book he finds to be our story. With the sinking of the whaling ship Pequod, sank her entire cargo of Negro and Indian, "Polynesian, Asiatic and Quaker and good, businesslike Yankees and Ishmael: she sank the lot of them."

Since that happened in 1851, the date of Moby Dick's first publication, the rest is post mortem, even Walt Whitman. Whitman's soullessness, his spreading himself so thin over the cosmos that he becomes Nothing-At-All, is a counterpart to machinised people, emasculated automobile owners, machine servants. Seeking to lose the burden of identity by merging himself utterly, in love, then in comradeship, Whitman turns at last to death. That is the only merging left if you

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must ecstatically merge with something. So, it is as a final voice, as well as the one American pioneer that D. H. Lawrence envisages Whitman. "He was the first to smash the old moral conception, that the soul of man is something 'superior' and 'above' the flesh. Even Emerson still maintained this tiresome 'superiority' of the soul. Even Melville could not get over it. Whitman was the first heroic seer to seize the soul by the scruff of her neck and plant her down among the potsherds.

"'There!' he said to the soul. 'Stay there!'"

D. H. Lawrence makes glorious the pioneer figure of Whitman, even as he repudiates Whitman's sentimentality. "The only riches, the great souls."

Lawrence opened the *Studies* with a query. Where is the American? Show us the Toad-in-the-hole, quoth he, who is going to be the lusty Civilized Boy of the world. Then he undertook the midwife's function, and did his job as no one writing of American letters

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has ever done before. Not one. No one. There is one little joke on D. H. Lawrence. In fact, the dimensions of the joke will dawn on him, when he sees some of the things done in America that are not known to the multitude. They happen to be achievements not in literature, but in painting and photography. Again it is a case of the Americans just being the thing the extreme Europeans were trying to be. You will see this work, Mr. Lawrence. There are some human documents that can not be matched in the world. They come out of the pioneers in the American wilderness of today who are fighting for the life of the soul. They are fighting and waiting. To use a phrase I heard one of them speak: "There may not be a call in America, but there is a voice." That voice responds to D. H. Lawrence. It welcomes him because he has achieved for American literature and the American psyche, what no other writer has done. He has got it down on paper, in the large, its essential evasions caught on its face. D. H. Lawrence in these

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subtle and brilliantly written analyses has done more than compose literary portraits, they are more than additions to the scrawl in literature's text book. In them he has drawn the portrait, made the photograph of America, us, It, and Now, even to the string of Immaculate Pearls, the ladies. He mugged us. What an awful face; and no one knew it until the Englishman came here for a few months and got it all down—though he must have been pondering it for several lifetimes. And an even prettier series of portraits of us may be expected sometime. Meanwhile our critics will do their best to conceal the indelicate occurrence. One does not write like D. H. Lawrence. It is too abandoned. Such intensity is an affront. And as for the truth—let's have no more of that, if it hurts!

These *Studies in Classic American Literature*, with *Kangaroo* and *Birds, Beasts and Flowers!* and the masterful translation of Giovanni Verga's novel, are the last we have heard from D. H. Lawrence. With the impact of his savage maleness, and the profound

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life he drew from the soil of Europe, he was able to give, he did give to America an inestimable treasure. *Studies in Classic American Literature* alone, is a foundation for a new American critical literature. Lawrence fertilizes with fire. No living American writing in a critical sense from now on will be able to ignore him. We are profoundly in D. H. Lawrence's debt. He has affirmed the essential to any respectable universe, the individual soul, against a machine-sodden world; he has written a hymn to creation out of his life, in the language we read; he has created the legend of our time, many-moded and incomparably rich and subtle, in characters luminously sensitive and clearly conceived. At last, passing on his way through our land, with the entire force of his genius, he has striven for the life of those living in America, with whom rests the fate of life in the western world. It is they, Americans, who must and will answer D. H. Lawrence's final query that ends the final poem of *Birds, Beasts and Flowers!*

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What are you, American Eagle?

Will you feed for ever on the cold meat of
prosperity?

Was your mother really a pelican, are you a
strange cross?

Can you stay forever a tame half-breed cock
on a golden perch?

Young eagle? Pelican-boy?

You're such a huge fowl!

And such a puzzler!

THE END

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

*From the introduction to The Widowing
of Mrs. Holroyd, by Edwin Björkman*

D. H. Lawrence is thirty-seven years old. "He was born in a coal-miner's cottage in the little colliery town of Eastwood, on the border line between Nottingham and Derbyshire. The home was poor, yet not without certain aspirations and refinements. It was the mother who held it together, who saved it from a still more abject poverty, and who filled it with a spirit that made it possible for her boy—her youngest son—to keep alive the gifts still slumbering undiscovered within him. In *Sons and Lovers* we get the picture of just such a home and such a mother, and it seems safe to conclude that the novel in question is in many ways autobiographical.

"At the age of twelve the boy won a County Council Scholarship—and came near having to give it up because he found that the fifteen pounds a year conferred by it would barely pay the fees at the Nottingham High School and the railway fares to that city. But his mother's determination and self-sacrifice carried him safely past the seemingly impossible. At sixteen he left school to earn his living as clerk. Illness saved him from that congenial fate. Instead he became a teacher, having charge

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of a class of colliers' boys in one of those rough, old-fashioned British schools where all the classes used to fight against one another within a single large room. Before the classes convened in the morning, at eight o'clock, he himself received instruction from the head-master; at night he continued his studies in the little kitchen at home, where all the rest of the family were wont to foregather. At nineteen he found himself, to his own and everybody else's astonishment, the first on the list of the King's Scholarship examination, and from then on he was, to use his own words, 'considered clever.' But the lack of twenty pounds needed in a lump sum to pay the entrance fee at the training college for teachers made it impossible for him to make use of the gained advantage.

"Two years later, however, he succeeded in matriculating at the Nottingham Day Training College. But by that time the creative impulse had already begun to stir within him, aided by an early love affair, and so he wrote poems and worked at his first novel when he should have been studying. At twenty-three he left the college and went to London to teach school, to study French and German, and to write." A year or so later, he gave up teaching to devote himself entirely to writing.

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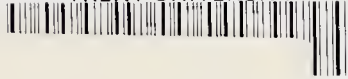
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THOMAS SELTZER

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Seligmann, Herbert Jacob
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